## Abstract

The invention provides for DNA sequences (introns and exons) encoding two genes located on the Z and W chromosomes of birds. These genes can be used to identify the sex of most birds (Class Aves). In addition, the genes control the sex of the birds, a genetic process which is initiated as an embryo. Nucleic acid fragments, proteins, polypeptides, antibodies and related products and their use in medicine and agriculture are provided. The invention may be used in sex identification or for controlling the sex of adults or the progeny of commercially important animals.